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Desert

MAGAZINE of the SOUTHWEST

DECEMBER, 1962

40c

WEEKEND TRAVEL:

JOSHUA TREE MONUMENT'S REMOTE CORNERS

NEW MOJAVE DESERT
GEM COLLECTING AREA:

GOLDEN VALLEY FLOWER AGATE

MINING CAMP EDITOR:

THE TRIALS OF T. S. HARRIS

PLUS: GUIDE TO SIX
GHOST TOWNS

SCUBA DIVING IN LAKE MEAD

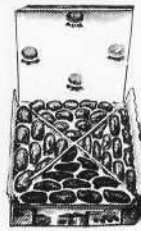
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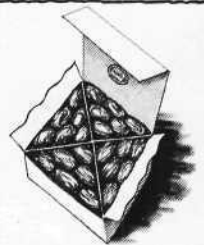


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—THE DESERT IN DECEMBER

PEACE OFFICER. At 3:45 on the afternoon of December 2, 1913, the Palo Verde Valley Bank at Blythe, Calif., was held-up and its cashier mortally wounded. Constable Asa "Ace" Gardner was the law in the Valley at that time, and with the help of a posse he tracked the two hold-up men southward from Blythe, across the Palo Verde Mountains, Chocolate Mountains and Algodones Dunes to Holtville. There he met the forces of Imperial County Sheriff Mobley Mead-



THE BLYTHE POSSE. GARDNER IS IN THE CENTER.

Desert

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTHWEST • 25TH YEAR

Volume 25

Number 12

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ows. The trail led them to the Franklin Hotel in El Centro where the armed robbers surrendered without a fight. Ace Gardner and his family left Palo Verde Valley in 1918, later settling in Coolidge, Arizona, where he continued his career as a peace officer to the age of 81, when death—from natural causes—overtook him a few weeks ago.

* * *

NEW STATE PARK. Approval was given recently by the California State Public Works Board for inclusion of the old ghost town of Bodie in the State Park System. This action clears the way for the acquisition of property in and around Bodie townsite so that this area can be maintained for public use and enjoyment. Initial plans call for the acquisition by the state of 440 acres, and rehabilitation of eight structures and the stabilization of 20 historical buildings. Also in the works: a campground.

* * *

THE FLORID CLUE. In the summer of 1961, an anthropologist with the Museum of New Mexico was standing in a fallow field alongside the Rio Grande north of Santa Fe, when she noticed something peculiar about the wildflowers at her feet: they were growing in a pattern. Archeologists know this phenomenon can be caused by carbon from the ashes of old fires which makes flowers grow denser and larger. Thus was discovered the site of New Mexico's first capital—San Gabriel del Yunque, established by Don Juan de Onate on July 11, 1598. During the past few months, scientists and students have begun the extensive excavation of this historic site (the first European capital

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DESERT is published monthly by Desert Magazine, Inc., Palm Desert, Calif. Second Class Postage paid at Palm Desert, Calif., and at additional mailing offices under Act of March 3, 1879. Title registered No. 358865 in U.S. Patent Office, and contents copyrighted 1962 by Desert Magazine, Inc. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs cannot be returned or acknowledged unless full return postage is enclosed. Permission to reproduce contents must be secured from the editor in writing. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: \$4.50 per year (12 issues) in the U.S.; \$5 elsewhere. Allow five weeks for change of address, and be sure to send the old as well as new address.

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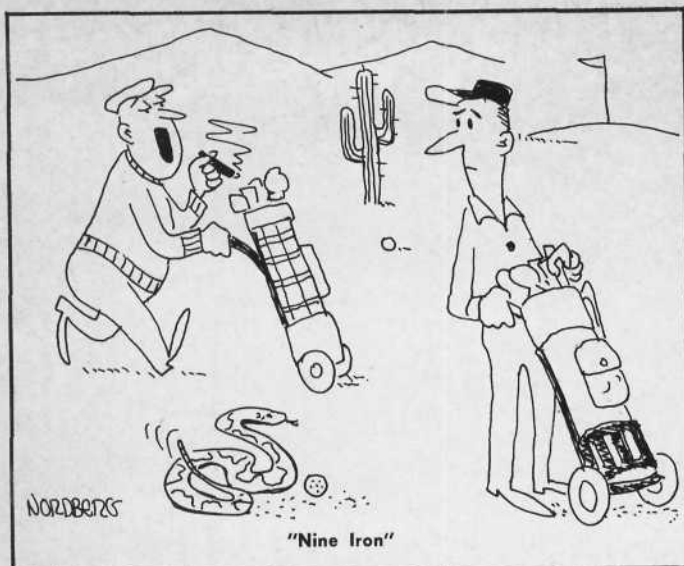
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desert detours

by Oren Arnold

"Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while." Mark 6:31

Let each of us re-focus, this month. Let's get out of our routines, out of ourselves, and once more put first things first. The sad thing is that we *have* to re-focus. We were guided back onto the proper course last December—remember? Why did we get off?

The desert is probably the best place on earth to do that re-focusing, for it was in a desert village that the Big Event happened, the most important event since time began. And who first got the tip-off about it? Some poor old Joes out there under the stars herding their sheep, and three Good Guys humping it across the sands on camels. They were all smart enough to know what to do. Are we?

Or put it this way, if you like: Christmas is not a time for "sophistication;" Jesus was not born in a penthouse on Fifth Avenue.

Christmas was created so that mankind would know how to change live-and-let-live to live-and-HELP-live.

"Myrrh," the little girl told her Sunday School teacher, "is what our mammy cat gives her kittens when she licks them." That is correct.

You readers are wonderful. All year you have written and said nice things about this page, this magazine. I wish we could greet each other personally come the 25th, but there are thousands of you, scattered all over. So, then here is a heart-felt "card" for each of you from Adele and me:

"Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Genuine "Christmas Tree" evergreens seldom grow on the desert, few if any pines, firs, spruces, hollies and such. Of course, it depends some on how you define "desert;" America has little real desert, just a few sand dune areas in California, New Mexico, et al. But I don't think the verdure matters; I doubt if many evergreens were growing around Bethlehem that Night.

It is, of course, a free country; you can celebrate Christmas as you please. You can even ignore it. But you ignore it at your own risk—the most terrifying risk a human being can ever take!

Most inappropriate way to celebrate Christmas—drunkenness.

This year, let's reform Christmas, hey? Let's all sing the carols in the same key!

Psychologists say that our adult behavior patterns were really established by the habits of our childhood. I guess that's right; I now have a compulsion to eat up all the Christmas cake and other goodies I can find around the house.

I'm not much interested in a *white* Christmas. I like the sunny desert kind; the same kind they have in Palestine. The snow theme is of Germanic origin anyway. And for sure I've had a belly full of Bing Crosby's moaning about what he's dreaming of. I like Christmas *music*.

Sit down here and listen, all you smarty big little kids; here's one worth re-telling: There was this red Communist Russian weatherman, see. His name was Rudolph. One day he predicted rain. "Fooley," said a young American soldier in Berlin, who heard the weatherman's broadcast. "It's not going to rain." But the American's young wife corrected him: "Don't be too sure, honey. Remember, Rudolph the red knows rain dear."

Families are troublesome things, dern it. Just when I get Planned Economy installed in mine, I suddenly love them so much I barge out and buy some Christmas luxury I've been wanting, and that upsets the Plan.

Finest thanks I ever had—a teen-age daughter opening her gift and exclaiming, "O-o-o-oh, Daddy! . . . OOOO-oo, wow!"

Pluck yourself a little paloverde limb off the desert. Ram it in a pot of sand. On each of its many little "needle" ends, stick a tiny colored gumdrop. For each child, put five shiny new dimes between half-inch strips of clear adhesive tape, and hang these from that Tree. How much added pleasure it will bring!

How wonderful is gratitude. That unfortunate family Adele and I helped a year ago has already brought us a Christmas gift. A note with it said, "We are on our feet now, thanks to you. You are two of His children. Can you come to dinner?" We'd rather have that than an invitation to the White House.

I read where many Communist countries are trying to take the Christian emphasis out of Christmas. Well, a lot of people here in the U.S.A. could show them how; they've already done it.

Christmas is a time for visiting. So—our latchstring is out, figuratively and literally. Ours is a genuine desert pueblo adobe home, at 34 West Pasadena Avenue, Phoenix; sketched here by middle daughter, Rosemary. If you get near us Christmas week (or any time) drop in. Our kids have grown up in it; now our grandkids romp here—Thank You, Lord. Love abides here.



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202 Christmas Chores
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203 "Come ye—into a desert place—"
May every happiness be yours at
Christmas and throughout the
Coming Year



204 Highballin' the Christmas Mail
Best Wishes at Christmas and
Happiness through all the Coming
Year



205 Thinkin' of you at Christmas
With Best Wishes for a Happy
Holiday Season



206 "Cowboy's Christmas Prayer"
Features classic western poem
and May the Peace and Good Will
of Christmas always be with you



209 Surprise Package
Greeting is a clever and appropri-
ate western verse



210 After the Storm
Merry Christmas and Best Wishes
for the New Year



**211 Christmas Greetings from Our
Outfit to Yours**
with Best Wishes for the Coming
Year



214 Home for Christmas
Happy Holidays and Best Wishes
for the Coming Year



217 Canvasbacks Coming In
Season's Greetings and Best
Wishes for all the Year



218 —from the two of us!
With Friendly Good Wishes for the
Coming New Year



220 Christmas Shoppin'
Merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year



221 "—there were shepherds—"
May the Peace and Joy of Christ-
mas abide with you through all
the Coming Year



222 Christmas Morning
Best Wishes at Christmas and
Happiness through all the Coming
Year



223 Christmas Night
Merry Christmas and Happy New
Year



224 Warmest Greetings
With Best Wishes for the Season
and a Happy New Year



226 Prairie Pest Office
Hoping you have a Happy Holiday
Season and a Prosperous New
Year



227 Candles of the Lord
May every happiness be yours at
Christmas and throughout the
Coming Year



228 Silent Night
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mas be with you through all the
Year



230 Greetings...
With Best Wishes for a Prosperous
New Year

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Correction: Due to a typographical error in the Desert Lakeshore Ranch ad in last month's *DESERT*, the holly gift box dimensions were given as 18x6x14". This should have read: 18x6x4". *DESERT* assumes full responsibility for this printing error, and we trust those who ordered from last month's ad were not unduly disappointed.

NEW IDEAS for DESERT LIVING

By DAN LEE



Low - Silhouette Camper—

Desert travelers owning pick-up trucks will appreciate the full vision of the new *Gem-Top Camper*. Plexiglas windows all around help the driver back-out of diagonal spaces without the usual blind-spot problem. Made in 24-, 30-, and 36-inch low-silhouette models, the all-steel 26-gauge top weighs only 180 pounds. Sizes available for most standard trucks, short or long beds, and even for compact models like the Falcon. Rear tailgate window swings and locks upward, and is removable in two quick motions, without tools. Two jalousied windows crank open for interior ventilation. Clear or tinted glass available. Advantages of this type of top are: less wind resistance, low weight, full driving vision. Priced from \$225 up, from Budd Distributors, 1325 E. Alosta, Glendora, Calif.



Self - Supporting Tent—

Tents that go up fast with no stake-driving and few ropes to tangle your feet in the dark, make sense. A new model by Hoosier Tents is such a unit. Basically an

8x10-foot tent, the *Penta Lodge* has push-button aluminum canopy poles that lock into position, hold the fabric taut and steady without outside stakes or guy ropes. (The only rope necessary is for the tent-flap.) Has zippered nylon screen-doors and windows, with eight-foot center height and six-foot sidewalls. Brilliant mint-green color, 7.68 ounce drill used throughout. *Penta Lodge* looks to me like the kind of tent weekenders will find quick, efficient, and less tiresome to erect. Priced at \$180, from Hoosier Tarpaulin and Canvas Goods, Inc., P. O. Box 574, Indianapolis 6, Indiana.



Self - Powered Brush Cutter—

The new *Mighty Hand Pruner and Trimmer* offers gas-engine driven portability for clearing land, and trimming brush and tree branches. The tool weighs a low 11½ pounds complete with 3/4-horsepower air-cooled engine. Two models are available: 48-inch reach, at \$165; and 84-inch reach, at \$185. An eight-inch circular blade spinning at very high rpm allows the cutter to swish through dense, hard limbs with ease. No power cord to drag around, no electric power necessary. Made by Safe-T-Products Co., P. O. Box 386, Ojai, Calif.

Compact Power Generator—

The smallest electric generator I've ever tested—the *Tiny Tiger*—is something campers may find appealing. Total weight—12 pounds—and tiny overall dimensions—6x5x6 inches—will amaze you. Priced at



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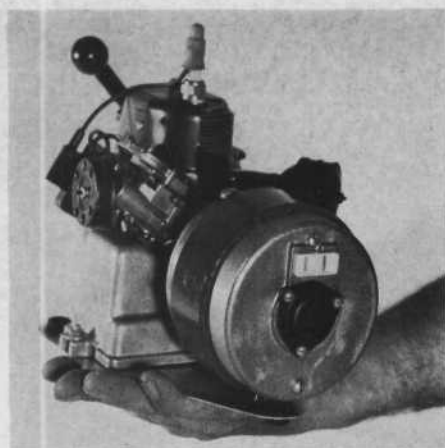
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\$99.50, this little powerplant produces 400 watts of DC current, or in combination models, produces both AC current and DC battery charging. Equipped with a 3/4-horsepower gas engine, air-cooled, the *Tiny Tiger* has a running time of about 45 minutes at capacity load. Refill with two-cycle fuel, and you're ready to go again. It's strong enough to power electric drills or impact-wrenches—in actual tests I made at home. Has recoil starter, with direct-drive spinning the generator off the engine crankshaft. From Gadco Electra, 2325 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif.



Sky Buoy—

Even the *thought* of getting lost in the wilderness can be a frightening thing. Now comes a measure of protection which those who wander far from the paved roads will want to consider making part of their "survival gear." It's called "The Sky Buoy"—and here's how it works: a brilliant orange-colored balloon inflates to 18-inch diameter and rises 180 feet in the air when filled with a flashlight-sized steel helium cylinder. The balloon is secured by a strong nylon line and will stay aloft for 40 hours. The Sky Buoy is visible for miles, and the entire kit weighs less than two pounds. Helium refills obtainable locally or at the factory. \$14.95 complete from S.O.S. Co., 361-D Navilla Place, Covina, Calif.

Station Wagon Mattress—

This new mattress for station wagons is cotton-filled, covered with water-repellent fabric, and fits the rear cargo area of most late-model station wagons. Stitched through from top to bottom to prevent shifting of the stuffing, the tag on this product is the Universal Station Wagon Mattress. Price is \$11. Morsan Tents, 10-27 50th Ave., Long Island City, N. Y. ///

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GOLDEN VALLEY FLOWER AGATE

A Suggested Field Trip to a New California Desert Semi-Precious Gem Locale

By MARY FRANCES BERKHOLZ

WHO SAID there were no more good gem-mineral collecting fields on the California deserts? Golden Valley, cradled between two arms of the Lava Mountains northeast of Johannesburg, offers the backcountry explorer an extra, tangible reward in the form of flower agate — a translucent brown-to-beige semi-precious stone with white “flowerlike” inclusions. Lapidaries report that this material will take a

good polish, and makes up into interesting cabochons.

Golden Valley is the largest of several troughs in the Lava Mountains mass. The valley's northern extremity drops off abruptly at the head of Bedrock Wash, a sizable run-off canyon flowing northward into Searles Lake. Southward, Golden Valley extends to Fremont Peak and is the drainage basin for a consider-

able area. Its lowest point is Cuddeback Dry Lake.

It is the northern arm of Golden Valley that holds the most interest for desert enthusiasts, rockhounds, seekers of Indian artifacts, photographers and students of the desert's romantic history. Few signs of modern man mar the natural beauty here. No cans, bottles or paper blemish this wild and desolate region. No powerline or gasline roads are here to remind one of the cities from which he has temporarily escaped. Instead, only the faintest of tracks wind in and out the washes; up and around the hills—tracks made by occasional prospectors and shearers following the prehistoric Indian trails. It is possible to gaze in every direction and see only the uncluttered, savage desolation of this High Desert land. Even the rocks are as time, wind and the forces of erosion laid them down. No “hammer-happy” rockhounds have smashed every rock in sight.

The first wanderers in this region were the ancient Indians who left written evidence at many petroglyph sites. Later, the Panamint and other tribes undoubtedly used and developed the main trails. Two of these original trails join in Golden Valley; the one coming west from Granite Wells circles north of Pilot Knob to Blackwater Well, then crosses Golden Valley to Squaw Springs. A few miles east of the old springs, a trail from the north joins the east-west trail. Its origin was probably in the Panamint Mountains in the Death Valley country. There was quite a network of trails across the Mojave. These routes utilized the various dependable springs which of necessity were no more than a day's travel apart. Many of the waterholes were used only as rest stops. But others, such as Squaw Springs, were permanent campsites. Potshards, metates and arrowheads at these waterholes give evidence of man's long association with the Mojave Desert.



THERE IS AN ABUNDANCE OF CUTTING-GRADE STONE IN GOLDEN VALLEY

In 1954 the white man's great migration to the Kern River goldfields began. Travelers coming from Salt Lake City, by foot or horseback, often chose to shorten their journey by turning west at Pilot Knob. They followed the old Granite Wells Indian trail through the natural passes then down across Kane Dry Lake, up Red Rock Canyon and over Walker Pass to the gold diggings. Golden Valley had many travelers in ensuing years as rich strikes developed at Goler, Laurel Mountain, the Rand-Stringer district, Red Mountain and Atolia. The strikes eventually played out and most Golden Valley traffic ceased.

In the early 1920s an attempt was made to homestead land on the northern edge of Cuddeback Dry Lake. Water was encountered at a depth of 50 to 160 feet which, in those days, was too great a depth to pump for profitable alfalfa farming. Farmers then tried to develop orchards, but the quality of the water was poor and eventually most of the homesteads were relinquished. Today, only the remnants of an old ranch building stands in memory of one such hardy pioneer. On old maps this site is designated as Brown's Ranch.

For the rock collector, the decaying buildings serve as a marker to the collecting areas in northern Golden Valley.

In the spring of wet years (1962 was such a one) this area is so heavily carpeted with wildflowers it is almost impossible to see the faint road tracks. The valley and surrounding hills become a giant flower basket of canary-yellow desert dandelions — hence the name, *Golden Valley*.

Purple nama, white daisies and short-stemmed lupine also give colorful dress to the valley.

From Brown's Ranch the faint little-used tracks wind northeast for a distance of 4.7 miles to a small dry lake. Keep left (not crossing the lake bed) and continue for another nine-tenths mile. At this point my husband and I erected a rock cairn within a rock circle to mark the agate area. It is on the left (west) side of the road. Park here. The outcrop of flower agate and opalite are found on the low hills to the southwest. These veins are exposed where heavy runoffs have cut deep washes into the flanks of the hills. Walk up the washes and watch for float.

On a second trip to Golden Valley we found several small pieces of excellent red plume agate. We did

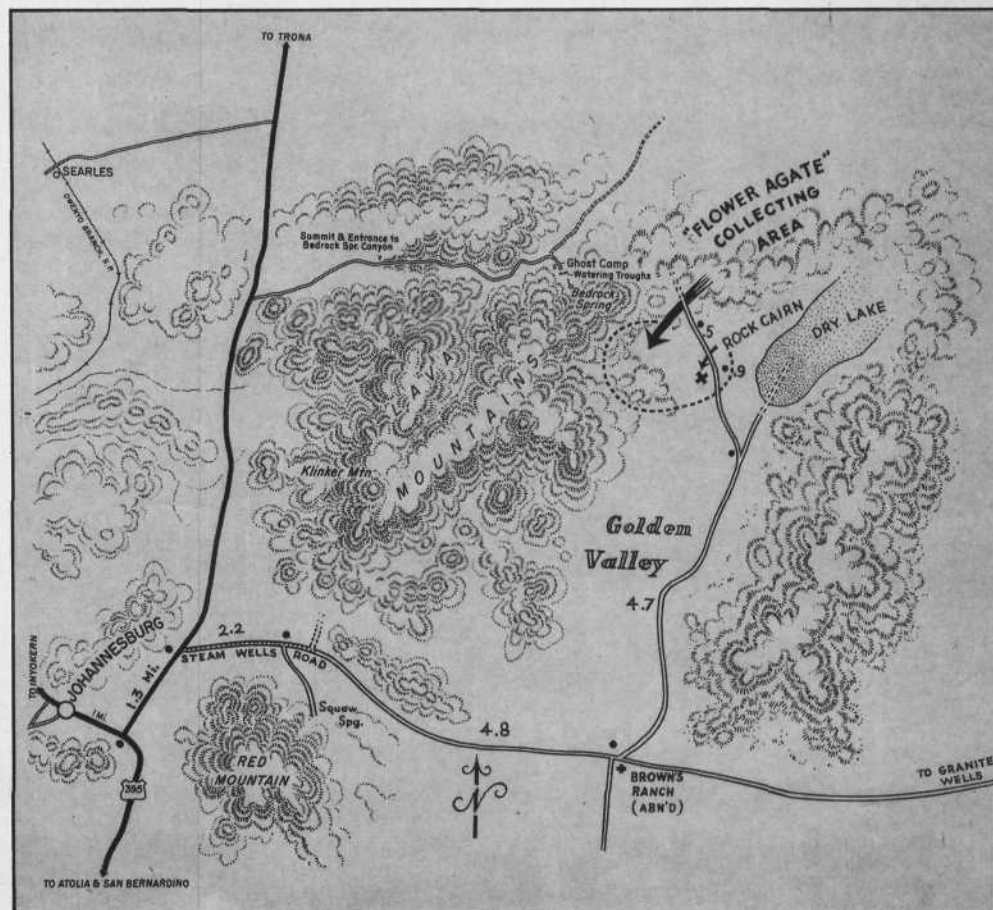


LARGE OUTCROPS OF FLOWER AGATE OCCUR ON THE FLANKS OF THE FOOTHILLS

not, however, find the main outcropping of this material, thanks to a heavy rainstorm complete with thunder, lightning and hail.

There are also a number of opalite veins exposed here, but for the most part this material is not of cutting quality.

The Golden Valley location is a new one, and the several materials to be found in float give evidence of deposits yet to be discovered. Here is a real opportunity for collectors to get in on the early development of what promises to be another good Mojave Desert gem field. ///



PANAMINT NEWS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 1875.

T. S. HARRIS,

EDITOR



The Trials Of

COSO MINING NEWS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1875.

T. S. HARRIS,

EDITOR



T. S. Harris

Daily Bodie Standard.

ISSUED EVERY EVENING (Sundays Excepted)

T. S. HARRIS,

Publisher Proprietor and Editor.



By HOWARD K. LINDER

Author of: "Dean of the Mining Camp Journalists" (the story of James Townsend) in the Sept. '61 *DESERT*

DEFEAT AND disaster plagued Thomas Spencer Harris throughout his career as a mining-camp editor. Fate tossed him about like a lizard in a flash flood, lifting him first to the heights of success, then plunging him into the depths of despair. But, tough and durable, endowed with the eternal optimism of a mining-camp man, Harris rose repeatedly to face more buffeting. In the end, he was a total failure. But his struggles against adversity were of heroic proportions. Certainly, no man ever tried harder.

By 1875, Harris was disillusioned with Darwin, California.

For three years he had managed, edited, and, at times, peddled the *Cosco Mining News* from cabin to cabin. His efforts were not always fully appreciated. He found himself embroiled in a political controversy and was subjected to bitter criticism. His character had been attacked, and he had even been threatened with assassination. Upon one occasion he had been bashed over the head with a six-shooter. But Harris refused to retreat. Even a dented skull failed to intimidate him.

"No newspaperman can perform his duties here," he philosophized in print, "without

treading on some very prominent corns." Unable to frighten him with threats, his enemies resorted to a fiendish act. They poisoned Fly, his little pet dog. This treachery almost reduced Harris to tears.

"He was a harmless little animal," he wrote passionately in an editorial, "a universal favorite because of his beauty and brightness." Thoroughly disgusted, he offered the *Cosco Mining News* for sale.

Searching for greener pastures, Harris was aware of a muffled roar to the north. The sound waves originated from the new camp of Bodie. His close friend, Pat Reddy, the criminal lawyer, was already firmly established upon this promising ground, successfully defending footpads and gunmen from due process of Mono County law. Thousands of fortune-seekers were rushing to the new excitement. Harris purchased an interest in an old four-horse stagecoach, tossed his nonpareil press into the boot, and while his wife packed, he made the rounds of Darwin in a futile attempt to collect outstanding debts. In the meantime, another friend, Oliver Roberts, received a letter from Bodie. An ex-sheriff and an accomplished artist with the six-shooter, Roberts had chased a dozen assorted scoundrels from Darwin, sending them scurrying deep into the Inyo sagebrush. "Stay away from Bodie," the letter advised, "some of your old enemies are here." The warning served as a gilt-edged invitation. Roberts paid Harris \$50 as fare and climbed aboard the Bodie-bound stage.

With the aid of Chinese firecrackers and a bottle of "Old Kentuck," friends fired the two adventurers out of Darwin. The stagecoach lurched onto the Lone Pine road on the first leg of a dusty 190-mile trip.

On October 2, 1878, the *Bodie Standard* announced, "After a rough voyage over alkali flats and sage brush desert, our new editor, T. S. Harris has arrived. Because of his harrowing experience, Mr. Harris is at present laid up for repairs." Seven days later, apparently revived, Harris penned his first editorial for the *Standard*:

"Eleven months residence in Panamint and three years in Darwin have been pretty rough on Yours Truly. We don't wish to abuse Old Inyo. She has more to contend with than any other God-forsaken county on the coast. With all her faults, we love her still because we have spent the best years of our lives in a vain endeavor to bring her out. That she will yet occupy an important place in the history of mining, we firmly believe. But capital is required to do it. We do not have it, so we concluded to leave the place, quietly if we could, forcibly if we must. We don't know that our efforts in the publication of the *Cosco Mining News* have been appreciated for the reason that we were compelled to settle with several of the mining companies for fifty cents on the dollar and to sue some of the others. Further, there are accounts of between two and three thousand dollars standing upon our books in our favor. It requires such little things to make people recollect one, and we are satisfied some of our creditors will never forget us."

After pouring out his misfortunes, Harris brightened at the prospects of the new camp, concluding, "We have met hundreds of old friends here." With optimism flowing like frontier whiskey, T. S. Harris launched his third and final mining newspaper.

Born in Ohio in 1836, Harris entered the printing trade when he was 12 years of age. His older brother, Eliphalet, had wan-

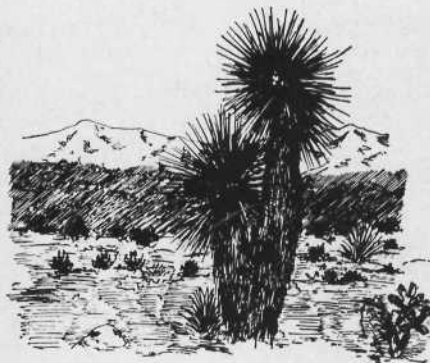
dered West during the California gold rush, then joined the stampede to the Comstock. T. S. hurried West but arrived at Virginia City too late to stake any claims. He continued on to Sacramento, where he was employed as a printer on the old *Record-Union*. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Harris enlisted in the "Sacramento Rangers." Stationed in San Francisco, Harris was promoted through the ranks until he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in May, 1862. At that time, the Federal government was deeply concerned over the status of Brigham Young and his Mormons. Aside from questioning the loyalty of the Saints, Washington had noted an increase of Indian hostilities along the Overland Trail where trains were under constant attack. Accordingly, Harris' regiment, under command of General P. E. Conner, marched eastward along the Pony Express Trail to Salt Lake City.

As an adjutant on General Conner's staff, Lt. Harris participated in several Indian engagements. But the Army utilized his talents in another project. The first genteel newspaper to appear in Utah was published at Camp Douglas in 1863. Strongly anti-Mormon, the *Union Vadtette* was no doubt edited by Harris. The Saints were powerless to remove this thorn in their side, and in the words of the editor, the "*Vadtette* proved a first rate Gatling gun in bringing Brigham Young and his infamous cohorts to a realizing sense of their duties to their government."

Following his discharge, Harris appeared in Austin, Nevada, where he may have worked on the *Reese River Reveille*. Here

he met and married Lydia Patterson. By 1870, Mr. and Mrs. Harris were living in Sacramento where he was employed in the Jefferis Job Printing Company. Three years later he joined Eliphalet in Independence, Inyo County, where he again worked as printer, while he organized a dancing school. Unfortunately, this raw frontier community had little interest in such cultural pursuits, and his venture was a failure. He returned to Sacramento where he won a position as minute clerk for the State Legislature. But not for long. Harris had acquired Mining Camp Fever. Thus, in 1874, when a new boom town erupted in the desolate mountains of Inyo County, Harris was ready to join the rush. Widely trumpeted as the greatest silver strike since the Comstock, Panamint appeared to be an unexcelled opportunity. He packed a small Gordon job press, his concertina, and a few cases of type and was off for Inyo County.

Panamint was tough. Jammed into a narrow canyon on the western slopes of the desolate Panamint Range, this collection of tents, shacks, and caves claimed few luxuries,



and not even a faint resemblance to a civilized community. However, Panamint did boast one of the finest collections of "hard cases" ever to assemble in the West. Gunmen and thieves, graduates of Pioche and White Pine, were allowed to pursue their professions unhampered. The great Wells Fargo took

continued on page 25



The desert's Crucifixion Thorn . . .

THERE ARE THREE shrubs or small trees in the Southwest called Crucifixion Thorn, all with stiff, stout, thorny branches. They inhabit low desert flats or dry rocky mountains of California, Arizona, New Mexico and Mexico. Because of their common name, they are often confused with and even sometimes thought to be the plant from which came the crown of thorns worn by Christ at the Crucifixion. The shrub illustrated at the right is a *Holacantha* (Greek: "all thorns")—sure to excite the curiosity of desert travelers. It occurs on the hottest parts of the Mojave Desert near Daggett, Amboy, Lavi and Goffs, and on the Colorado Desert near Calexico, but more often along the lower Gila River in Arizona. Fifty years ago I passed quite a patch of these shrubs along the southern edge of the Hayfield

Dry Lake near Desert Center. This colony was destroyed when the Metropolitan Water Company tried to make a reservoir out of the playa.

I well remember how eagerly my burros ate the brown, densely-clustered dry nutlike fruits which grew for the most part out near the ends of the thorny branches. The small greenish flowers are either male or female and are borne on separate plants. The plant's few leaves are mere scales and soon drop off.

Holacantha, curiously enough, is a near relative of *Ailanthus*, the Chinese Tree of Heaven, which grows both wild and cultivated in many parts of the United States as well as other places in the world.

—EDMUND C. JAEGER

... *A Joshua on a king post*

WHEN TRANSIENT MAN leaves life-shards to mark his way, John Burgess stops to read them and record them. He is a master of using his canvas as a Scroll of Time unfolding moments of stilled life strongly suggesting that nothing lives . . . and nothing dies. He draws that great silence that comes after the spent noise of men who followed a relentless urge to go on, and farther on, in search of a dream.

Here he has sketched the ghost dugout home of a ghost miner, once dreaming of wealth at Garlock, a ghost town of the old Rand Gold District in the Mojave Desert.

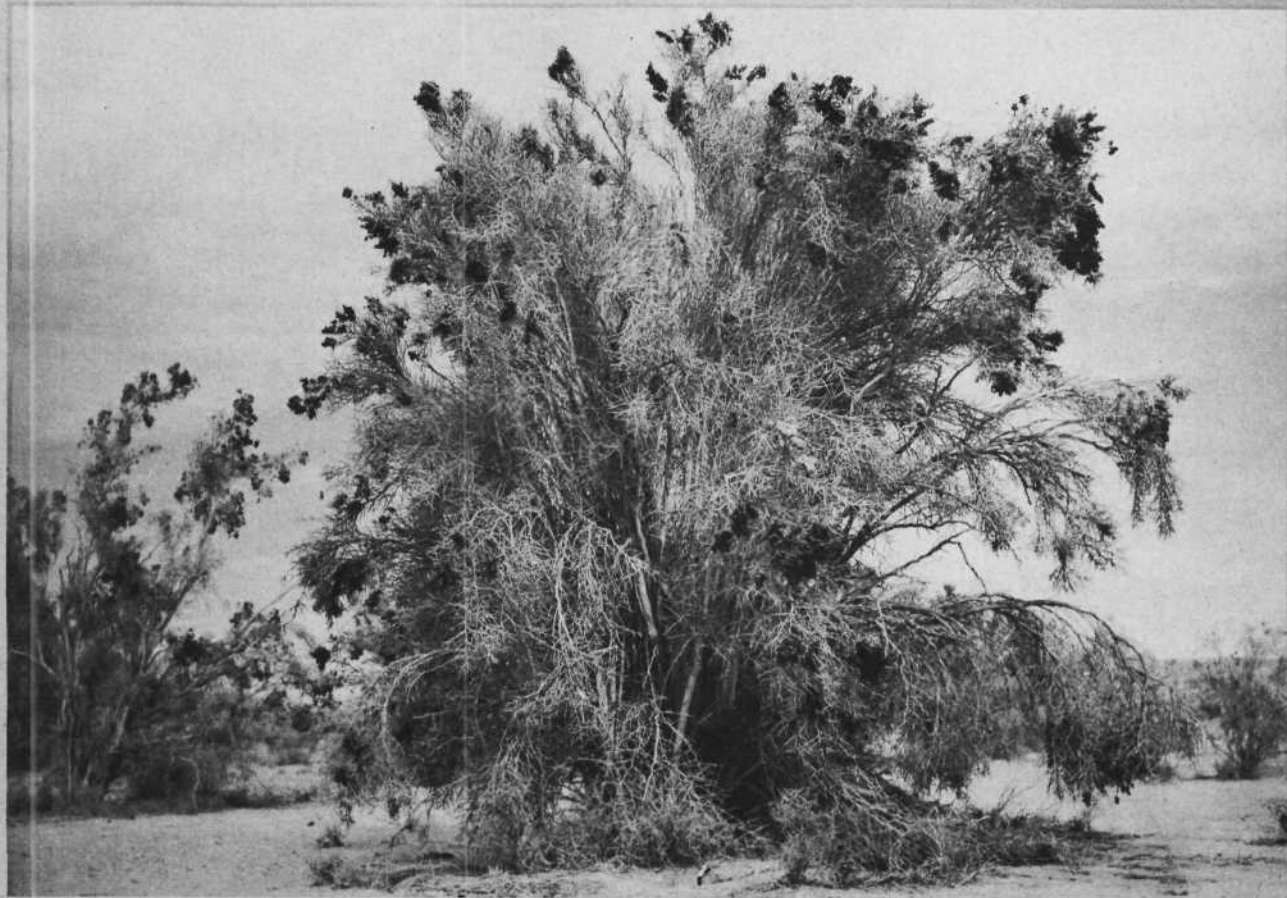
The dugout is still there, hardly less desolate than it ever was. Some old-timer once chose a backdrop of muraled mountains, and a front yard taking in considerable territory of uncluttered distances. Then he dug a pit into the ground, lined it with rock, made of railroad ties a roofed framework that rose three or four feet above ground, and called it home. Set deep in the earth, the dugout foiled winter winds and cooled the savage heat. Its protection also beck-

oned other creatures, including rattlesnakes whose castanets are part of the song of the desert.

Burgess, a documentary artist who lives in Lancaster, is drawn to places like this. He sees more than falling timbers, crumbling earth returning to earth, and an old bottle, amethyst-tinted from many suns. In this sketch he veils the old dugout with the "Glory of the Lord shining round about" a homesick miner's heart on the Eve of a long-ago Christmas. The Christmas Tree on the king post is a sentinel Joshua with its bayonets guarding a faded ivory bloom lifted in prayer. The miner's raffish family tree—the Tumbleweed—has paused in masses by his eaves to comfort him. A spirited friend, following his Star of the East, has come bearing a large beribboned bottle of "frankincense."

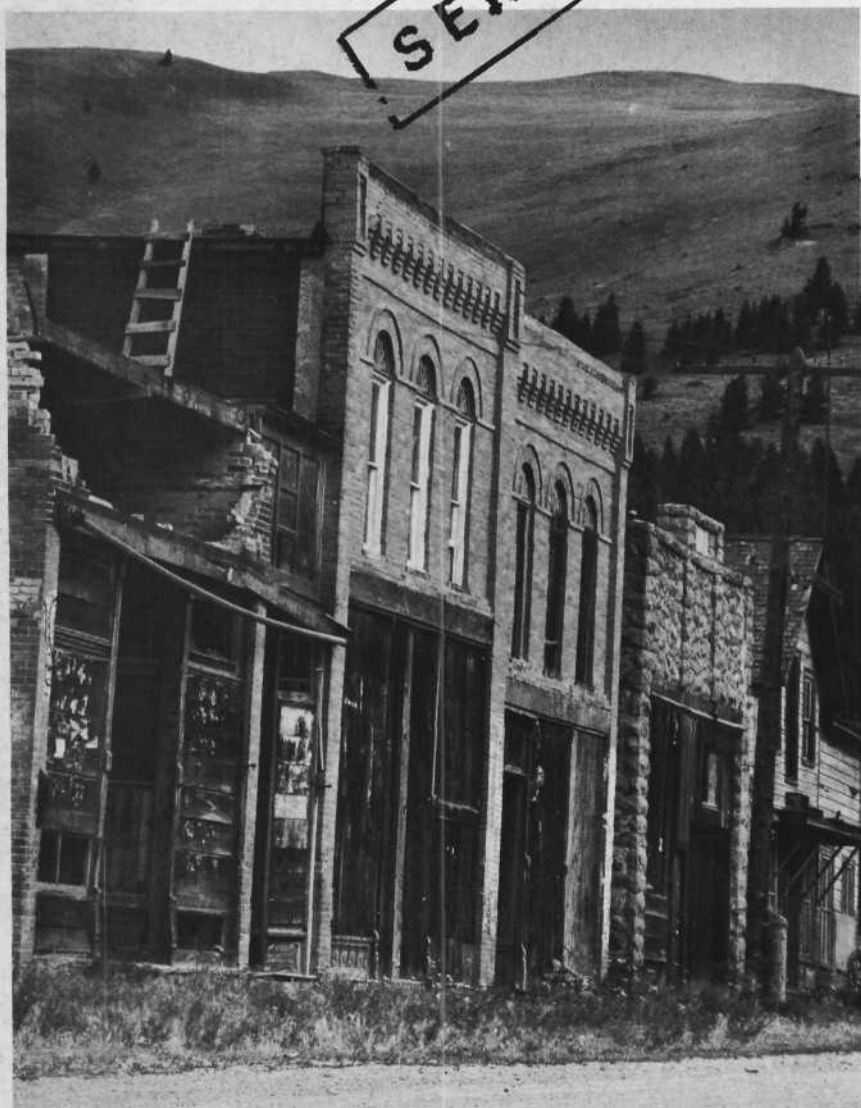
The amberized moment seems to say that on Christmas Morning this Desert Loner will find that, as ever, the Christ Child has cleared the low lintel of the dugout—and of man's heart.

—LADY RAE EASTLAND



MINING CAMP MAIL

SERVICE DISCONTINUED



● **MARYSVILLE, MONTANA.** There's more to see here than in most ghost towns—principally because there is still some mining activity hereabouts. But, Marysville today is nothing like the booming Marysville of the '80s and '90s when it was the most prosperous gold mining town in the state. The postoffice was at the left of the building made of field stone in the photo above. In addition to the usual stores, saloons and churches, Marysville had a baseball diamond, and at last report the bleachers were still standing. The town is north of Helena; reached from U. S. 91 over good all-weather road.



● **ROCHESTER, NEVADA.** In 1913, 1500 people were getting their mail from this building (photo above)—and then the old, old story was repeated: the ore body pinched-out, the mines closed, and the townspeople drifted away. Rochester was built on the side of a hill. At last report, only the postoffice building was still standing in the upper portion of the town. The old silver camp is reached by driving 14 miles north of Lovelock, then turning east on an improved road at Oreana. Rochester is about six miles from Oreana. In the general vicinity are several other mining camps: Lower Rochester, Packard, American Canyon, Unionville.

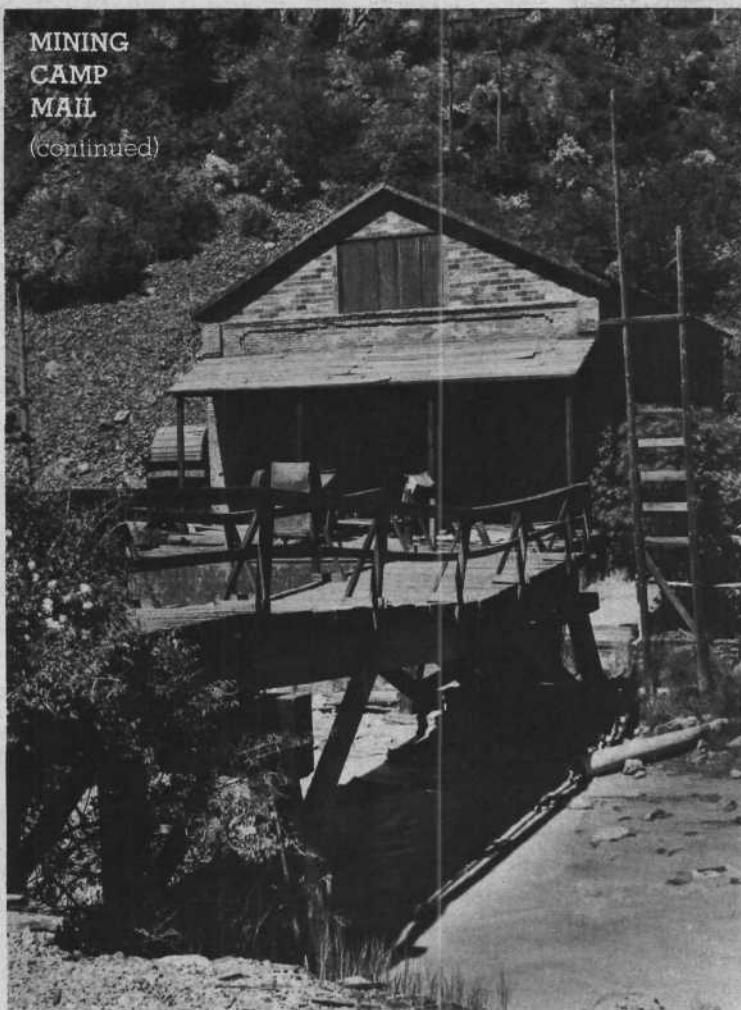
● These photos of old mining camp postoffice buildings are by LAMBERT FLORIN, whose recently-published book, "Western Ghost Towns," is proving to be a popular guide to the interesting towns that once made mining history in the West. "Western Ghost Towns," containing more than 200 Florin pictures, is available by mail from Desert Magazine Book Shop (see pages 38-39).



● **MASONIC, CALIFORNIA.** The empty window frame in this building (photo at right) still slides—but it has been a long time since a letter was passed through it. Off-shift miners lined-up for their mail on the small standing platform whose remains lie strewn in the sage. Gold was discovered in Masonic in the 1860s. The "Jump Up Joe" mining camp was built in three sections—Upper, Lower and Middle—with the postoffice in Middle Masonic. The old town is in Mono County almost on the Nevada state line. A paved road from Bridgeport leads to the Bridgeport Reservoir and Nevada 22. Three miles down this road watch for the graded road to the east that leads the nine miles to Masonic.



**MINING
CAMP
MAIL**
(continued)



● **GEM, IDAHO.** This is the rear view of the postoffice (photo at left). The front has the huge metal doors typical of the frontier period. The postoffice was operated in conjunction with a general merchandise store; then the building became a warehouse for the Hecla Mine, a mile up-canyon. More recently it was used as a Boy Scout meeting place. Today it is empty. Some of Gem's remaining buildings date back to 1886. They are squeezed into the narrow ledge between creek and steep canyon walls. At Wallace, turn north-northeast on paved Idaho 4; it's four miles to Gem. Burke, another mining relic, is four miles further on.



● **MANHATTAN, NEVADA.** The postoffice building (photo above) was adjoined in the rear by the jail. In January, 1906, the "DeLamar Lode" reported that "real estate in the new towns of Manhattan and Central is booming . . . lots on Main Street are now held at figures ranging from \$1300 to \$1900 each, and frame buildings for saloons, stores, and hotels, are being erected as quickly as possible." To reach Manhattan from Tonopah, drive six miles east on U. S. 6, turn left and proceed 35 miles north on paved Nevada 8A, then turn right (east) for seven miles.



● **CHLORIDE, ARIZONA.** Located between town and mines, this building served as a branch postoffice for miners, according to local sources (this claim is unverified). Chloride's fate moves in circles; currently its fortunes are at low ebb; but the town has been on the

ropes before—and it has always sprung back. One of the high points came decades ago when Tiffany of New York operated a turquoise mine here. Chloride is 18 miles northwest of Kingman—14 miles north of Kingman on U. S. 93-466, and four miles east on Arizona 62—first class highway all the way. ///



DIVING in the DESERT

THE SCUBA DIVING FRATERNITY IS DISCOVERING LAKE MEAD'S SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS

By CHORAL PEPPER

THEY'VE BEEN across it, over it, and around it, and now they're going under it—"it" being Nevada's man-made Lake Mead.

Enthusiasts of the fast-growing sport, SCUBA diving, are migrating

from all parts of the country to explore the canyon country *under* the waters backed-up by Hoover Dam. Lake Mead's reputation as one of the West's most desirable training locations for underwater diving is growing. SCUBA experts such as Harry Wham, whose Navy and civilian diving experience dates back to 1941 when he devised some of the earliest underwater diving equipment ever used in Hawaiian waters, is high in his praise of Lake Mead.

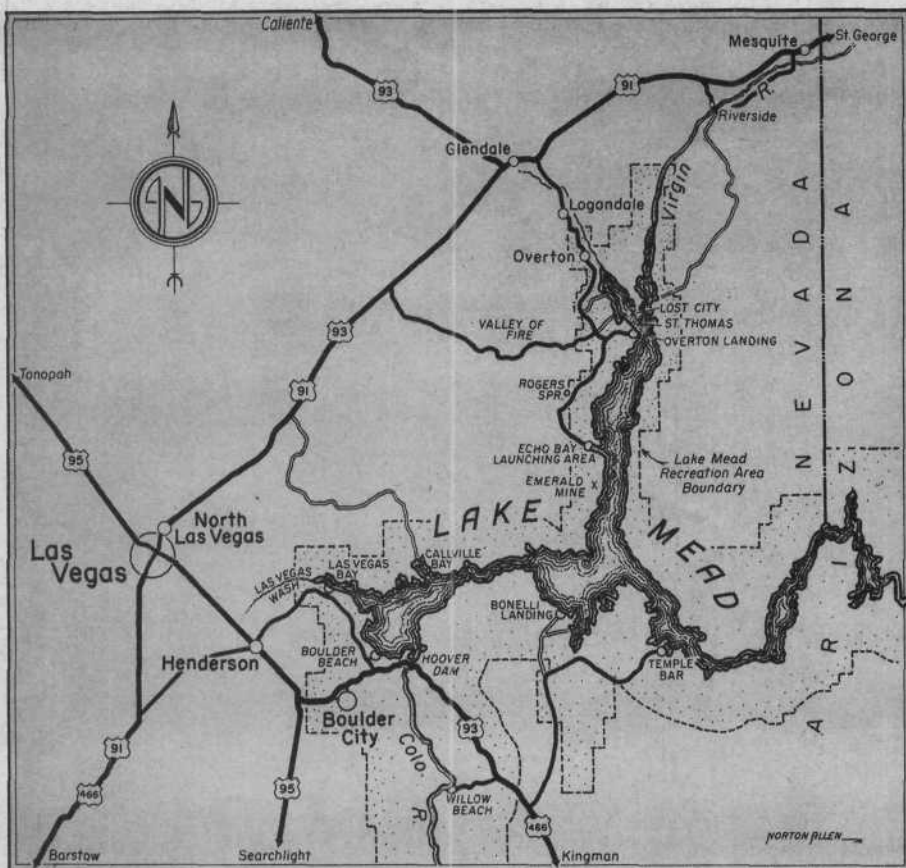
One of less than a hundred divers in the world qualified by the National Underwater Aquatic Institute, Wham has dived in almost every important body of water in the world. His laboratory is crammed with underwater cameras, depth gauges, compressors, gold nuggets scooped from river beds, skeletons of marine

life, rusty treasure from ancient ships, and almost every type of old and new diving equipment known.

Adventures to seek buried treasure or sunken galleons periodically lure Wham from Lake Mead, but his prime interest is the development and perfection of underwater equipment, instruction, and technique. This, he feels, he can best do at Mead.

Besides its abysmal depth, interesting underwater terrain, comparatively mild surf, safety from shark threat, and conveniently located air compressors for the filling of diver's air tanks near the new Lake Mead Marina, Mead's fresh water is kinder to SCUBA equipment than salty ocean water. These are some of the important reasons why more and more SCUBA diving clubs are turn-

THE AUTHOR RECEIVES SCUBA LESSON FROM EXPERT HARRY WHAM



ing up on Lake Mead's uncluttered shores.

Twenty years ago, deep sea diving was the strict province of the specialists such as Navy frogmen, underwater scientists, and salvage experts. Today, with the development of lightweight equipment and interest stimulated in Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus (SCUBA), diving is a universal sport. This sport has three attractions: recreation, adventure, and a chance to learn history first-hand. The floor of Lake Mead is not likely to yield relics from the Spanish Main or buried pirate treasure, but it does contain a wealth of anthropological artifacts, not to discount a rumored lost emerald mine.

It was along Mead's Overton Arm that Basketmaker-Pueblo Indians dwelt in pithouses and multi-room surface dwellings 3000 years before Christ. The Lost City, discovered in 1924, was excavated over a period of 13 years until the rising waters of Lake Mead halted work. It is highly probable that moving silt plus changing movements of earth caused



DIVERS REST AFTER A LAKE MEAD UNDERWATER ADVENTURE

by the flow of the Virgin and Muddy rivers will deliver to underwater explorers much of the pottery, turquoise mortuary offerings, utensils, beads, arrowheads and other remnants of this civilization.

Most serious obstacles facing divers in this particular part of Mead is the lack of visibility due to silt-laden water, after heavy spring runoff and winds. This silt settles during certain periods of the year, but it is wise before scheduling a diving trip to Overton to check on water conditions with the Superintendent, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Boulder City, Nevada.

The Lost City is not the only underwater ghost town in the lake. In the 1860s the Colorado supported a considerable traffic of paddle-wheeled steamships. Callville, near the head of summer navigation on the river, was a busy Mormon port, connected by wagon road with Salt Lake City. St. Thomas, also under water, was a Mormon settlement near the confluence of the Muddy and Virgin rivers. Lake Mead divers, to date only having spent little time under these waters, have already recovered several pieces of rusted iron forging equipment which experts date to Callville's steamboat days.

Also of interest to divers are the remains of a civilization possibly 15,000 years older than any previously discovered on this continent, which are about to be excavated less than 30 miles from Mead's west shore. Experts say the Tule Springs find is potentially one of the most important archeologically in the New World.

Vegas Wash runs directly into Lake Mead. If extinct camel, bison, sloth, mammoth, horse, elephant and man co-existed in this area during the Ice Age, then chances are some of the evidence lies deep under the depths of Lake Mead at the end of Vegas Wash.

Another promising prospect is the lost emerald mine, purportedly lying under Overton Arm's Cleopatra Cove. While hunting for uranium a few years ago, a Nevada prospector filed a claim on such a mine near the shoreline. When he returned several months later, Mead's water level was up 96 feet.

Each season he checked the level, expecting it to drop; each year it rose. Finally, in the spring of this year, it reached close to an all-time high. Tired of waiting, the prospector suspended a barge from three sides of the cove, installed a winch to hoist silt and fill that had settled over the underwater location, and



JACK PEPPER, AUTHOR'S HUSBAND, FINDS A MACHETE

employed SCUBA divers to recover the precious gems. Unfortunately, three months of steady diving produced no results. It is the hope of amateur divers that the professionals merely quit a mite too soon.

SCUBA diving is not for the show-off, or the uninitiated. There is one cardinal rule that must be followed by the diver: he must never hold his breath while rising under water. When you breathe-in compressed air underwater, where pressure is greater than at the surface, this compressed air will gradually increase in volume—if it is not exhaled—as the diver rises toward the surface, and the lungs have no further capacity, at which point they rupture. The SCUBA diver must learn to always breathe normally.

When approached intelligently and with a certified instructor to give the lessons, both the young and

middle-aged find themselves at home under the water. For beginning divers, Lake Mead can't be beat. Its mild surf leaves the student diver free to concentrate on learning how to breathe normally while rising under water—free from the worry of being wave-battered against a rocky shore, or chopped-up by boats spinning overhead.

The sensation under water can only be described as crazy. At about 50 feet your body becomes equalized in "space." You're a feather—weightless and free. You twirl, spin or stand upside-down. You live and breathe where earthmen have no right to be. Your ears pick up eerie squeaks, whistles and rhythms. Your eyes piece together the fragments of a strange realm.

You become an explorer of the unknown . . . an astronaut under the waters of the Colorado River ///



"JOSHUA LANDSCAPE"—PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHUCK ABBOTT

JOSHUA MONUMENT'S HIDDEN BYWAYS

By LUCILE WEIGHT

OF THE 400,000 persons who visit Joshua Tree National Monument each year, nearly all stay on the paved roads which lead to the most popular scenic spots and camps. They know Jumbo Rocks, Cottonwood Springs, White Tanks and Indian Cove. They have photographed the grotesque Elephant, Bull, Trojan and other imagined creatures and portraits in stone. They have angled their cam-

eras at the Joshua trees in their endless variety of amusing attitudes. Families have enjoyed food cooked on grill stoves in the scores of campsites; have gone adventuring into the Hidden Valley hideout of cattle rustlers.

But, if you need a weekend completely away from urban tension and crowds, you can find it in many remote corners of the Monument which are almost as tranquil and undisturbed as they were a century ago. Here, less than 150 miles from Los Angeles, are sections where little more than faint trails remain to identify a day when cattle grazed in a strange and exotic land, and an era when prospectors and miners probed for gold.

Three such isolated sections, accessible by good dirt road, are Stirrup Tank, the Squaw Tank - Pleasant Valley area, and Juniper Flat.

Stirrup Tank is bypassed by the main road leading through Pinto

Basin. Even in the early days of this century, miners generally used the canyon heading east of the one containing this tank, for water was more accessible at White Tanks two miles to the north or at Cottonwood Springs far to the southeast. But to a man prospecting in the Hexie Mountains, Stirrup Tank was a convenient — and private — camp spot. Long before any white man penetrated this mountain upland, though, the Indians found it a pleasant, sheltered corner.

It is easy to reach. Less than a half-mile south of the White Tank entrance is a marked dirt road showing Stirrup Tank area as 1.5 miles. This leads through a broad band of Mojave yuccas and down a slope with a groundcover mainly of blackbrush, cassia and scattered creosote. In little over a mile, a large rock outcrop is passed on the left, then a vast wonderland of rocks comes into view below. Among the rocks just passed

This will allow time to climb through the range west of Stirrup Tank, locating Indian shelters and reaching juniper and pinyon and oak. This rock area is one of the striking occurrences of what geologists call White Tank monzonite, which looks like a fine whitish granite and produces remarkable formations. Although its name is from the typical example at White Tank, it is the tremendously massive rock so noticeable in much of the Monument such as in the Stirrup Tank area and Hidden Valley. The mineral

Visitors seeing these dikes for the first time can hardly believe they are not ruins of block walls, the blocks

Squaw Tank is interesting not only as a former Indian camp, but for the evidence here of cattle days. The troughs and dam near the huge sheltering rock provided stored water for cattle ranging down in waterless Pleasant Valley just below. The lower elevation and the bunch grass and browse which in earlier days were fairly thick there made it convenient for cattle, but water was a problem. At Squaw Tank, rainwater backs into a long and sinuous little lake, and overhanging rocks at places help retard evaporation. We have seen con-





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AN APLITE DIKE —"BUILT" BY NATURE, NOT BY MAN

siderable water here late in the year following good summer rains. The dam is only one of several which cattlemen constructed long before the Monument was established and which now augment a meager water supply for wildlife.

This must have been a favorite camp of Indians, judging by the number of mortars and the thick layers of old ash and the pottery sherds that wash out in sudden rains.

If you have time, and are a careful driver who heeds warning signs, drive into Pleasant Valley and across to Pinyon Wells. This is designated as a desert trail by the National Park Service, for it is not maintained and not regularly patrolled. Some cars have had trouble with sand, so caution is needed. A right branch near the foot of the little pitch goes directly across to Pinyon Wells, but you may want to continue ahead to skirt the east side of the valley first, to the remains of the old Gold Coin and other mines 1½ miles from Squaw Tank. From the mines you can see a thread of road angling southerly "to Indio," heading for Berdoo Canyon, a route that was used by many motorists while autos still had high clearance. This occasionally is used by four-wheel drivers now. From this road a branch cuts over to Pinyon Wells, or you can go back to the first branching.

Drivers of cars with fair clearance and slow speed usually will have no trouble, but should take care at the many cross-cuts caused by drainage down the great bajada from the Lost Horse area to the north.

Drainage also comes from the Cottonwoods in the south, yet strangely, Pleasant Valley is very dry. It is

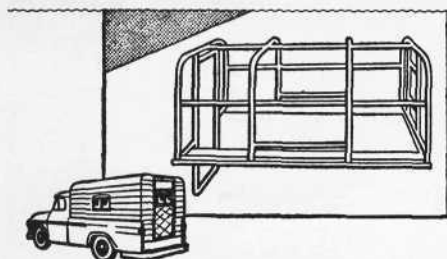
thought that underground drainage carries water east into the lower Pinto Basin. Efforts to obtain water near the former Gold Coin camp failed, one hole being dug 60 feet to dry bedrock.

An old metal sign still stands—pointing back to Twentynine Palms and east to El Dorado Mine in the Hexies. The latter is located about nine miles away on the now almost vanished road that led across Pinto Basin, then past Cottonwood Springs and eventually to Mecca. To get water to operate the mine and mill, the owners ran a pipeline from Pinyon Well, about seven-tenths of a mile from the sign. Short sections of old pipe can still be seen scattered in camp debris and mesquite growth.

The few remains at the Pinyon camp, including three double concrete tanks for the little mill and outlines where cabins and tenthouses once stood, give no hint that his narrow canyon once rang with the shouts of children and saw the homemaking activities of their mothers. Yet it was so described by a traveler almost 60 years ago. Among the remains is a trough where thirsty freight teams stopped, and there is a rock fireplace in one side of a partial wall.

Long after the camp was abandoned, travelers still drew water by bucket and rope from the well close to the road. Another well, 250 feet west, is sunk into solid rock, but the wood framing has caved into the shaft. Just beyond this is a rock shelf of road which would stop nearly any but four-wheel drives.

A short distance farther is the summit of the Little San Bernardino, this section called the Pinyons. This is juniper and pinyon country, but



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the sandy and rocky trail soon plunges again into desert on the Coachella Valley side. This in 1909 was a "new wagon road" between Indio and Twentynine Palms. But in World War I days, which put an end to much of the mining, the camp here was abandoned and the upgrade was described as impassable. However autos of those days could make the downgrade—if the driver was handy with baling wire.

This summit country is beautiful in winter snow. I'll always remember it as the first place I saw the little black-headed Oregon juncos as they teasingly flirted among the pinyons just out of reach as we hiked through snow.

For a quick look at the third out-of-the-way spot, go back to the main paved road in Queen Valley, and turn left (west). There are fine Joshua trees in the Juniper Flat area, and growing in granite ridges are junipers, pinyons and nolin. About 4½ miles in from the main road, a right fork starts a circle drive in picturesque Juniper Flat, with a designated picnic area. If you should be here early or late in the day, and your party is a quiet one, you might catch a glimpse of a Nelson bighorn sheep or a mule deer. The Park Service has endeavored to protect one of the sheep's few watering places by cutting off the trail down to Stubby Spring, indicated by the left fork at Juniper Flat entrance.

A partial census taken in July, 1962, showed a high ratio of bighorn lambs, a third of the ewes observed having lambs—a good sign that these animals are holding their own. The quail you might see here is the moun-

tain species. Coyotes also may appear but they frequently approach some of the more central camps, in hope of finding leftovers.

So, without being a specialist of any kind, you can stretch both your knowledge and enjoyment of the Monument by turning off the main roads to do a little adventuring on your own—but do it with caution and be sure you do not break NPS rules. By driving slowly, and occasionally stopping to hike, the alert visitor will start asking questions. Some of the answers may be found in published works, while oldtimers and Park Rangers can answer others.

Conducted tours will be available weekends during December and thereafter to May, each lasting from a couple of hours to a full day.

Mindful that the Monument is a goal for many who seek the remoter desert lands, the Park Service has been increasing its camping facilities. Basic work on several sites has progressed most of the past year, and the go-ahead was received October 10 for the final construction phase of new camps at Cottonwood and Jumbo, and for other additions. Cottonwood, near the south entrance, will have an entirely new campsite, west of the Oasis, with water piped to a grounds and a total of 127 camps.

Jumbo camp will be closed when December visitors come. This very popular site, at 4400 feet elevation, is being enlarged to 135 campsites, due to be completed by spring. But sufficient camps for winter visitors are open elsewhere. In case you should be lucky enough to find snow



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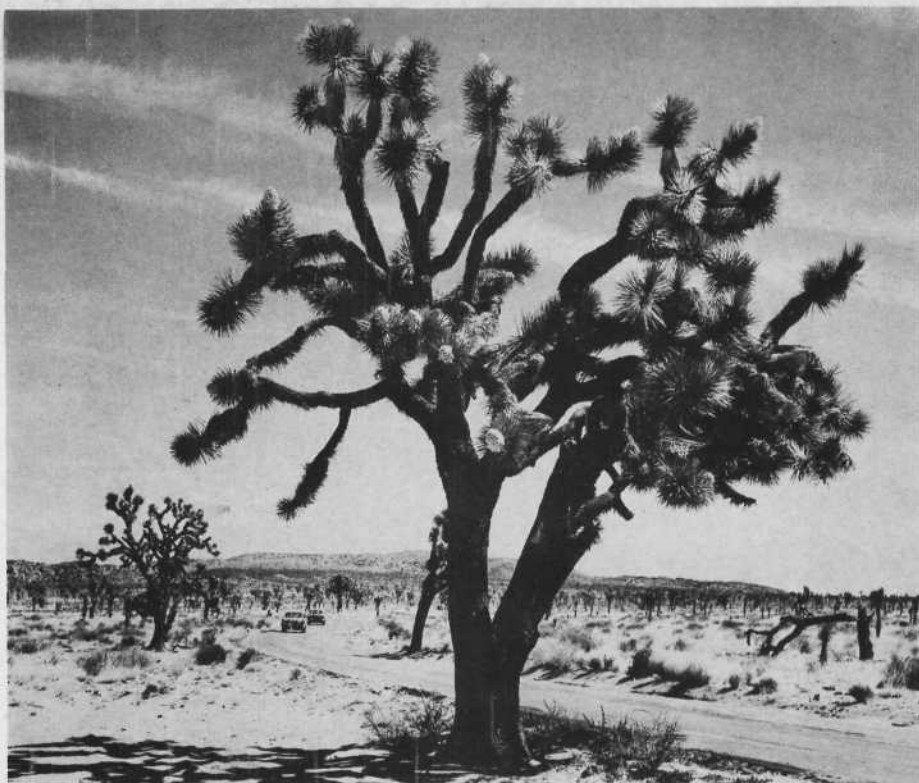
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JUMBO ROCKS CAMPGROUND. VISITOR FACILITIES HERE ARE BEING ENLARGED.

The Trials Of T. S. Harris

continued from page 11

one hurried look at the new camp and refused to have anything to do with it.

But not Harris. He enthusiastically disembarked from a stagecoach amid a scene of confusion and feverish activity.

Harris rented space for a tent, and acquired an editor, one D. P. Carr, formerly of the *Carson Appeal*. Carr had taken up Faro in the new camp with something less than brilliant success. He was, in fact, dead broke. Assembling the press in the tent, the two-man staff slept on the ground under the desert stars. Dawn often found them covered with a blanket of snow. In the opening editorial, Carr described the hardships, concluding, "The metropolitan journalist would be dismayed by the obstacles encountered by the pioneer printer."

Carr picked his way laboriously up and down the canyon in search of subscribers and advertisers, while Harris labored at the press. The first issue of the *Panamint News* hit the rocky streets on Thanksgiving day, 1874. That night, D. P. Carr hit the trail down Surprise Canyon and out of the country, his pockets bulging with the cash obtained from advance collections. Harris was shocked. In an editorial titled, "Dead Beat," he bemoaned this "mis-carr-riage of justice" and asked anyone meeting up with the bounder to have him "in-carr-cerated" in the nearest jail. He then set about to correct the damage, promising to publish a paper which would "do honor to the Panamint district."

No telegraph lines marched up Surprise Canyon to furnish Panamint with outside news. But Harris found the lively camp furnished local items in abundance. Garrotings, shootings and robberies were of almost daily occurrence. The stages plying Surprise Canyon were fair and frequent game, and bullion shipments were lost so regularly that it became nearly impossible to ship silver from the camp. So many local residents were involved in holdups that Harris described the knavery as a matter of running upstairs to rob their own trunks. It was, he concluded, a question of selling one's bullion and having it too. The solution to the problem finally came from the fertile

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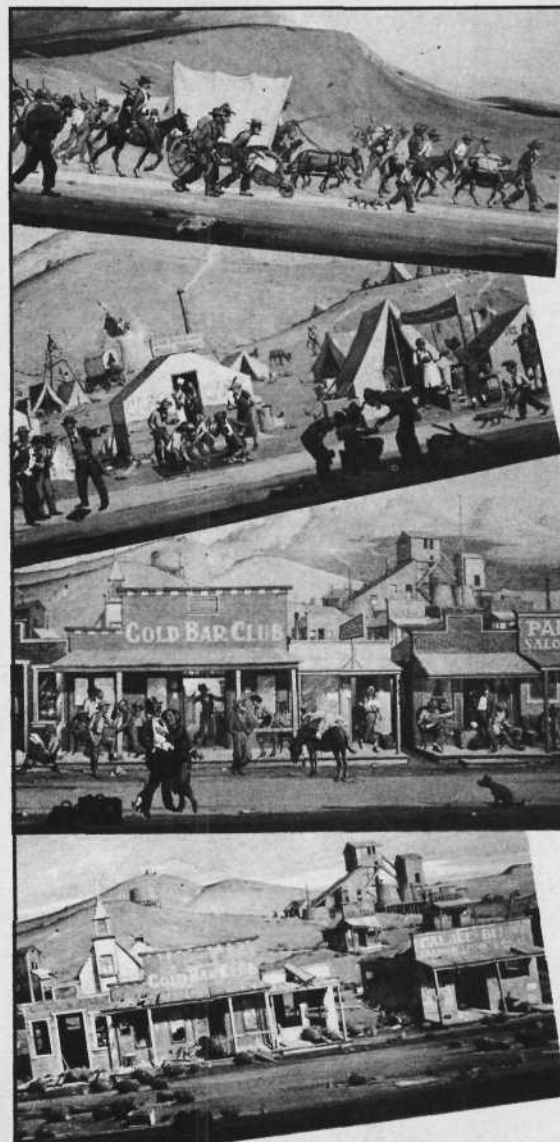
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minds of J. P. Jones and Bill Stewart, both men of long experience in Western mining camps. The silver was cast in huge balls, each weighing 500 pounds. Derricks lifted the bullion aboard wagons where, without gun or guard, the loads rattled down Surprise Canyon as would-be thieves stared helplessly at the rich cargos.

Newspapers published by Harris are noted for their first-hand reporting. No scissors and paste reporter, his accounts of mining camp life are lively, detailed, and leave a vivid picture of the times. His enthusiasm for Panamint's future was unbounded. His editorials predicted schools, churches and even a railroad—institutions that would never grace the Panamints. The News pumped for the creation of a new county—Panamint—with the town itself as the county seat. While painting these visions of glory, fate was busy dealing a different hand.

The silver veins were pinching out. Gradually, citizens were departing from the camp. Noting the signs of decline, Harris editorialized, "If this paper goes down, the probabilities are that the town, business and all will go with it." The item proved to be an obituary for Panamint. Down

Surprise Canyon poured freight wagons heaped with goods, and drawn by mutinous mules. A flood of humanity spread out on the desert floor like a cloudburst. Forgotten was Panamint. The rush was on to Darwin, a promising camp whose "ores are of a different character" and therefore, quite naturally, much better. In the wake of the storm came Harris, his wife and press, all aboard a string of mules, bound for Darwin and three years of struggle.

The Bodie Standard was the pioneer journal of Mono County, established in 1877 by Frank Kenyon, a sort of desert William Randolph Hearst, with an empire of newspapers, including the *Esmeralda Herald*, *Lyon County Times*, *Pioche Review*, as well as previous papers in Oregon, California and Montana. In partnership with Fred Elliot, an experienced newspaperman, Harris purchased *The Standard* from Kenyon. The future looked bright indeed. With an established newspaper in a booming camp, Harris had every reason to be optimistic. But again, fate was waiting to cuff him across the ears. Competition arrived in Bodie. There seemed to be a newspaper behind every sagebrush. The new owners of the *Standard* found themselves involved in a unique battle of newspapers.

At on point in the war, Bodie had four daily newspapers. In addition to the *Standard*, Main Street was flooded with copies of Bob Folger's *Bodie Chronicle* which had moved over from Alpine County. The *Daily Free Press* was inaugurated by Harry Fontecella and E. R. Cleveland. S. F. Hoole purchased the press of the defunct *Reno Record*, hauled it to Bodie and started the *Morning News*. Pat Holland and C. S. Hayes launched the *Daily Union*. Two other papers were in the planning stages. This mountain of print served a community of fewer than 8000 people. The *Virginia City Enterprise* observed gleefully, "The Bodie papers are waiting for each other to die."

When the *Standard* and the *Free Press* weren't fighting each other, they were teaming up against the *Chronicle*. Conservative and proper, Bob Folger's *Chronicle* was appalled by the lighter approach employed by the *Standard* and the *Free Press*. The latter papers utilized exaggeration and raucous humor to reflect the Bodie scene.

"This type of journalism is considered smart," complained Folger, "so much bad and so little good is printed about our town by these papers that outside readers are given a

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IT IS BELIEVED THE "BODIE STANDARD" WAS PUBLISHED IN THE HOUSE AT LEFT

bad impression of Bodie. Outside papers, eager for items from Bodie and in want of copy, scissor these exaggerated accounts and pass them throughout the land. No wonder families are loathe to come to our town."

The *Daily News* remained aloof from the fighting, but soon found that subscribers were aloof to the *News*. Pat Holland's *Union* hardly got off the ground before its bubble burst and it folded.

In the meantime, publisher Harris was having more trouble than competition. His health was failing, a condition he ascribed to the severe winters at Bodie. Less generous reports circulated about town that the cause of his ailment was a common commodity found bottled on the back shelves of Wagner's saloon. Harris retreated to the milder climate of San Francisco, leaving his partner Elliott and the editor H. Z. Osbourne to manage the paper. Matters then became confused. Elliott joined Hoole on the *Morning News*, thus cagily operating opposition newspapers simultaneously. Osbourne became disgusted and deserted to the *Free Press*. Harris then sued Elliott for a dissolution of partnership. In a grim legal battle, he finally won control of the *Standard*. But it was a hollow victory. During the fight, circulation had dropped and advertisers had deserted.

The end came in July, 1880. On that date the final issue of the *Bodie Standard* appeared. Harris bade goodbye to Bodie with an editorial titled "All's well that ends well." It is a classic account of the trials of a frontier publisher:

"The *Standard* has always stood up manfully and published everything that was just and right. It has helped a few individuals and a few

individuals have helped the paper, while many more who have benefited through its columns have 'gone to the springs,' and let us hope they may be drowned before they return. A large number of publishers came to Bodie, established newspapers, and it has been a hard tough game to even get credit for bread and butter. The expedients to which they have resorted to keep their sheets before the public have been curious and funny. Last winter when wood was \$30 a cord, and not to be had at that price, one of the publishers was forced to burn a good pair of gum boots to keep the office warm and to heat the roller so that it would make an impression . . . The *Standard*, however, kept on the even tenor of its way, the cash taken in went legitimately to support several mining companies, employees too numerous to mention, and several fellows who wanted to go to Congress, to say nothing of nearly every man in camp who has blown up, fallen down a mine shaft, been shot, or summoned to appear before the grand jury in Bridgeport.

"We surrender gracefully to our ambitious contemporaries . . . It has been a struggle for supremacy and while the fight between us has, at times, been bitter, we cannot but admire the indomitable pluck and will of our brothers of the press in Bodie to attain success. We have felt a great pride in trying to keep the *Standard* alive . . . While we are not unmindful of the efforts and assistance of our friends, still we think it to our interest to surrender the field to those who are more physically and mentally endowed than we are to fulfill the duties of a publisher. . . "

After defeating Harris and his *Standard*, the *Free Press* chased the *Chronicle* out of town and gobbled up the *News*, emerging the sole vic-

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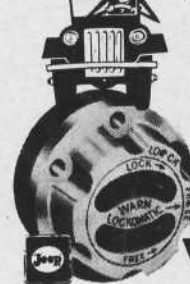
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A HOBBY THAT PAYS

tor in the newspaper war. In nearby Benton, W. W. Barnes offered his congratulations to the *Free Press*. Editor Barnes then suggested the new masthead read:

THE WEEKLY STANDARD-NEWS
and
BODIE FREE PRESS
and
PAT HOLLAND'S UNION
and
BODIE CHRONICLE
and, possibly,
THE WEEKLY BENTONIAN

After leaving Bodie, Harris returned to Sacramento. For a time his movements are difficult to follow. The *Free Press* reported that he had forwarded his equipment to Tombstone, Arizona Territory, where it was alleged, he and Pat Holland planned to launch a paper in opposition to the *Epitaph*. Apparently, nothing came of this rumor, although Holland did start a paper himself.

Harris returned to the scene in late 1881 in Santa Ana, California, where he began publishing the semi-weekly *Standard*. Two years later, he sold out and launched the *Daily Evening Free Lance* in Los Angeles. This sheet suspended after a brief success. In his next venture, Harris teamed up with one Charles Whitehead, founding the Los Angeles *Evening*

Republican. Partnerships were a nemesis to Harris, and this one was the most disastrous of all. Whitehead was an Englishman and somewhat of a con artist. Harris furnished the press and the cash while Whitehead established himself at the editor's desk. A week later, the Englishman fired Harris for intemperate habits. Swindled out of his money and possessions, Harris reacted in the manner of any red-blooded mining-camp man. He fetched his English Bulldog revolver, returned to the office and dispatched the wretched Whitehead with a bullet in the side. Such swift justice might be tolerated in a mining camp, and even applauded in Panamint, but unfortunately for Harris, the scene was Los Angeles. Whitehead recovered, but Harris was found guilty of assault and sentenced to one year in San Quentin.

After serving three months, Harris was released. He returned to the newspaper business, organizing the Lancaster *Weekly News* in January, 1885. By November of the following year, he had moved his press to Antelope Valley. But bad luck was dogging him constantly. His wife died, following an operation, and he suspended his paper. His final effort took place in 1887 in Tulare, California, where he initiated the *Weekly Standard*. For a time he prospered,

even acquiring a new wife, a former acquaintance from Inyo County.

Harris was 54 and totally defeated. Gone was the eternal optimism. He fell victim to the bottle. He opened a small print shop in San Francisco, but was unable to make a living at this business. He was forced to move into an apartment with his wife's relatives. His health failed. Periodically he spent time in the Old Soldier's Home.

One night in 1893, he left the apartment and wandered through the fog of San Francisco. Despondent, after a prolonged drinking spree, he took a room in a lodging house. After he had drained the last bottle, he penned his final piece, a somewhat disjointed farewell:

I have had a great time. Never mind what may be said. Many people say what they think they know. But they will know more as they grow older. But what is the use of knowledge when it comes into contact with brains cultivated by years of experience. I devote my brains—help yourself to what is left.

T. S. Harris

He crossed the room, removed his old English Bulldog revolver from a small valise, and fired a .44 bullet into his head. ///

Desert Garden Guide

— THINGS TO DO IN DECEMBER —

Even in the Southwest, garden tasks are less numerous and less pressing in December than at any other time. House plants such as Philodendron, Rubber Plants and Ivy will benefit from a light sponging with soapy water to remove dust and grime, allowing the leaves to "breathe" freely.

Begin watering Christmas Cactus freely early this month, and place in full sun in a moderately warm room.

Dormant spraying to combat scale insects, other pests and diseases can be done in December if nighttime temperature remains above 35 degrees.

If any plants, shrubs or trees are damaged by frost, do not cut back until you can see where the new growth will start. The dead leaves and wood will offer some winter protection.

The best time to buy deciduous trees is during the dormant season, usually right after Christmas. Choose those that will be suitable for your location and needs. Plant trees and shrubs as soon as possible after arrival, whether from the local nursery or by mail order.

Remember that you must not disturb the

root ball of container-grown or balled-and-burlapped trees or shrubs when planting.

The hole must be dug twice as deep as the depth of the roots. Keep topsoil and subsoil in separate piles—removing large stones and debris. Keep sides of the hole perpendicular. The hole must also be twice as wide as the spread of the roots, and a round hole will look much more professional. Proper preparation is of paramount importance in the food-deficient desert soil.

Break-up the soil in the bottom of the hole; make deep fissures to insure water drainage and allow easier and deeper penetration of anchor roots. Compost, peatmoss and well-rotted manure should then be mixed with some of the top soil and placed in the bottom of the hole. A very small amount of a complete and non-burning fertilizer can also be worked into the soil—it will stimulate growth of the roots. Top soil is best to fill-in around the roots, but if it is not available, the subsurface soil will do. Be sure to add plenty of compost or peatmoss.

The tree should be planted the same depth as it was before, or even about two inches deeper. You can tell how deep it was planted by the water mark or muddy

band at the base of the stem. Water as you add the soil. Tamp the soil gently with your foot. Keep the tree straight. The easiest way is to have someone hold the tree while another puts in the dirt.

It is a good idea to give support to trees having a trunk diameter of less than two inches by driving a stake into the hole before planting so as not to injure the roots.

Be sure to soak bareroot trees or shrubs in water for a day or two before planting. Cut off damaged roots. After planting, cut off about a third of the top growth to compensate for root loss. Don't cut off the leader of evergreen trees; cut above outfacing buds.

Mound soil in a two- or three - inch - high ridge around the edge of the hole and fill several times with water each week.

Plants will benefit with a spraying of wilt-proof, or you can add shock-deterent when planting. Trunks may be wrapped with burlap or special paper to prevent sun burning.

When tying the tree to the stake, protect it with a piece of rubber or other material. ///



HOW THE BABY WAS FOUND IN THE HAT BOX



MRS. HUGH DANA AND THE ABANDONED BABY

Dec. 24, 1931 / Mesa, Ariz.

HER CHANCE of survival was one in a million. With all its spiritual warmth, our desert can be a cold and dangerous region, and this event took place on a winter night at a place 10 miles from the nearest human habitation. Next day — Christmas morning of 1931 — news of it stirred the nation. It *had* to be a miracle, the simple-hearted desert folk said then and still say. I am inclined to agree with them. Surely this is the Southwest's Number One story, and in every detail is absolutely true.

About 8 p.m. that Christmas Eve, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Stewart were hurrying home from Superior to Mesa, Arizona, anxious to play Santa Claus for their infant daughter. Ed hummed *Silent Night*, then both sang "Star of wonder, star of light," and

THE DESERT'S CHRISTMAS INFANT

By OREN ARNOLD

out there truly the desert stars shone with proud brilliance. Then—BANG—a tire blew out.

Ed had jack and wrench going in two minutes, so Mrs. Ed walked out onto the cactus-studded gravel and sand. It was wildly beautiful out there; only three camels with Wise Men were needed to make it a per-

fect Christmas card. One star even seemed to shine brighter than others, but doubtless that was her imagination, she said later. It was right over head. She hummed another carol, while Ed worked. Then 200 feet or so out there in the greasewood and rabbit brush, she saw a large black object on the ground; an old, round piece of luggage—a hatbox with a handle. She stared in idle curiosity. Presently she called.

"Spare's on," he shouted back. "Let's get rolling."

She insisted that he come. A woman's intuition, maybe? Who knows?

"For Pete's sake, it's nothing but a discarded hump of trash!" her man grouched, and gave the hatbox a kick. Then, to please her, he lifted the lid of the thing.

A frail sound greeted them. They



MRS. ED STEWART, WHO FOUND THE BABY IN THE DESERT



OFFICER JOE MAIER, TO WHOM THE FOUNDLING WAS BROUGHT

stooped over it. Gingerly, Ed pulled back a corner of an old blanket.

There lay a tiny baby, very much alive!

We have to imagine the impact, the nerve reactions, the sheer astonishment. When they had gathered their wits, Mrs. Ed was cuddling a baby girl and re-wrapping the dirty blanket around her, Ed was muttering and searching the area for clues.

He found no hint of a track, no clue of any kind, and time was speeding by. They hastened to their car and sped on to Mesa. En route, they decided what to do. So within the hour they pulled up at the Mesa police station where a brawny, genial officer named Joe Maier was on duty, and plopped the foundling into Joe's lap.

"For heaven's sake!" Joe exclaimed.

"Exactly, sir," Mrs. Stewart nodded. "We found her. On the desert." And proceeded to relate details. Santa was already a-soaring by then;

people were in their homes beside their trees, the police station was a lonely place. For heaven's sake, indeed, do something.

Now, if merely a bank had been robbed, or a citizen murdered with a shotgun, or something else routine, Officer Maier would have moved into action instantly. He was well trained, fearless, astute. But this thing, now—! Whatever does one do with a week-old baby plopped into one's official lap by an excited young couple? The police manual, he knew, held no instructions. And common sense seemed to elude him for a while. Then an old friend, Deke Le Baron, happened by to wish Officer Maier a Merry Christmas.

Deke's mouth popped open too.

"Mrs. Stewart said that baby's hungry and needs attention, but unless the law allows me, and I have no authority to—she wasn't very rational either—," the police officer was saying. But about then Deke came to his senses.

"Whyn't we take her out to Ma Dana's?" he suggested. "You know Ma."

They knew Ma. Ma Dana helped people. Loved people. Took unfortunate ones in. Fed and clothed them, helped them to get jobs, restored their confidence. Did Christian things you and I ought to do more of—a rare and wonderful type. They all hastened out to Ma's humble home.

Ma heard the story, reprimanded the men for not coming sooner, and hastened inside. While the men crushed their hats and stood around waiting officially but awkwardly, Ma bathed the baby girl and soon was in a rocker feeding her from a bottle.

"O little Child of Bethlehem, hmm-hmmmm . . ."

She started crooning and rocking, then glared at the two big men and gave them their orders: "You two whisper a little prayer to God then get out and hunt for whoever abandoned this sweet baby!"

That started new wheels turning, of course. Joe and Deke were glad to get into action. The Stewarts had gone on home in a daze to check on their own nine-month-old baby, kept by grandmother. There were many things to be done, Christmas Eve or no.

Many things were done. Officials from nearby Phoenix joined the Mesa City and Maricopa County force, as the news spread. Then volunteers joined. Every inch of that area where Ed Stewart had the flat tire was combed. And the search for clues went on for months. The Stewarts were "checked out" with ease, as being wholly honest and responsible. And not a clue, not one hint, of the baby's background could be found.

By Christmas dawn newspapers all over America, Canada and even in Europe and Mexico had headlined the story, many with banner lines across front pages. Ma Dana had named the foundling Marian, for the

Virgin Mary. Telegrams began to arrive—and people. By noon that Holy Day, several hundred folk had gathered at Ma's front yard, all anxious to see the baby and hear every detail. Ma wouldn't let little Marian be disturbed. She let a doctor examine her, and he pronounced it a perfect baby child about five or six days old.

By mid-afternoon, 28 couples had asked to adopt Marian. By the following Tuesday the number was nearer a hundred. "If the baby Jesus was to be born again," said one old gentleman in the crowd that kept coming, "tain't likely Joseph and Mary would have to worry about a crowded inn. Just look at all these loving people!" The Latins, the Mexican friends, were most emphatic in proclaiming the event a miracle, but a lot of us Anglos agreed. Sermons were preached about it. Layettes were made, many gifts kept coming.

Finally Judge E. L. Green in Pinal County took official action. He awarded Marian to the couple of his choice — not one of the wealthy couples, nor one of the poorer, but a good middle-class home. Then the new mother spoke to His Honor and the few witnesses there, of whom I was one.

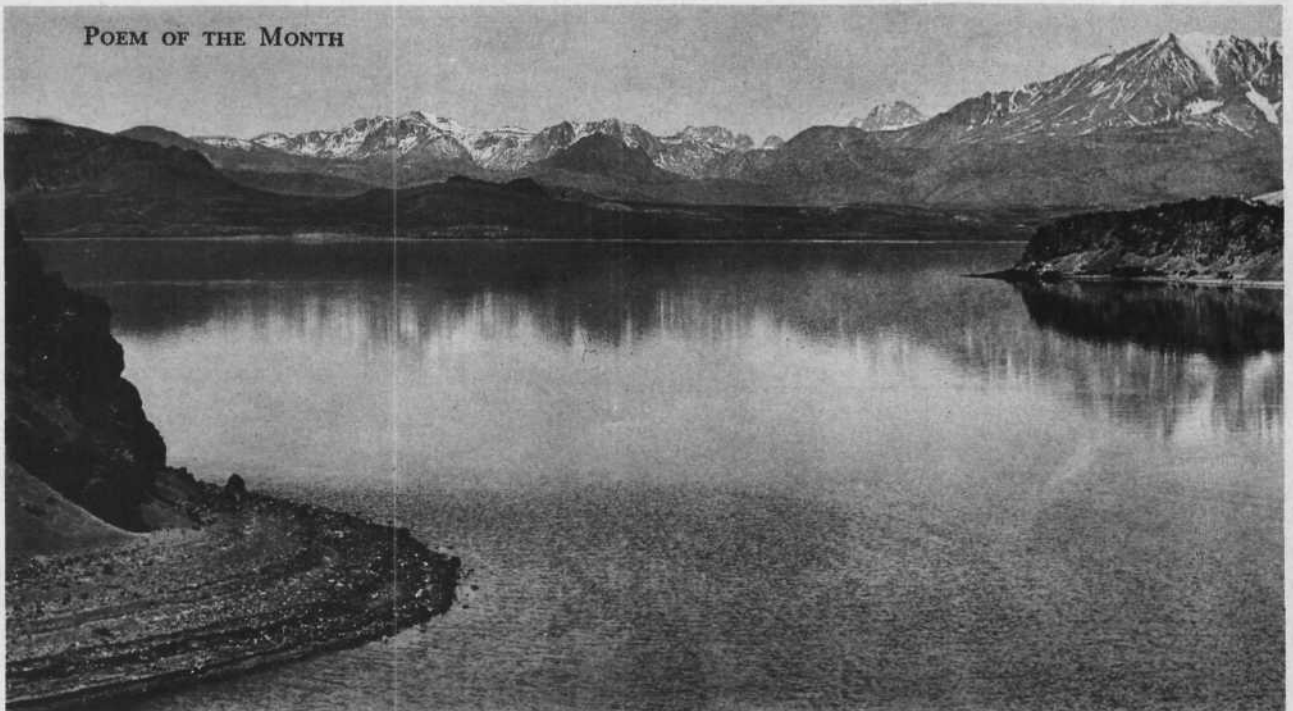
"Please," she begged, "never tell where Marian is. Let her grow up without publicity, not as a freak found on the desert. Please never tell." His Honor nodded—and looked ominously at us lesser folk. It was a silent, solemn moment there in the court.

Now in the 1960s I checked-up on Marian. She was well and happy, a fine young woman leading a normal life. But again her mother asked, "Please never tell. It has all been so wonderful. People are so kind. Let it rest as a miracle. Please never tell where she is or who she is."

I'll never tell.

///

POEM OF THE MONTH



ON PASSING MONO LAKE

Hurrying home to light our Christmas candles,
we heard the singing . . .
Like a psalm in a world of emptiness, of silence,
it echoed across the level sounding-board
of that lonely lake where desert owns the water.
The lifting strain of song still swelled and rose,
faded into the nothingness of twilight.
We listened, heard it again, searched the
bleak horizon,
saw no one, nothing . . . far as the eye could see.

Had our ears betrayed us? Radio? Some ultra-sonic
miracle?

Still we heard it, rising, falling, lifting,
drifting away on the sighing desert wind.
Adjusting once more our binoculars, we saw him,
a far-off Indian boy, his minimus flock,
white dots in a swale of green, an oasis,
vivid against the desert drift of gray.
Young shepherd, singing from his rock,
a lonely rock in a lonely land—
but singing.

—MAUDE RUBIN

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THE DESERT IN DECEMBER (continued from page 3)

in what is now the United States). Many artifacts—bronze candle holder, chain-mail links, pottery fragments, a carved bone gunstock ornament—have been unearthed. But, so far nothing of outstanding value has been found—nor is it likely to, for the Spaniards voluntarily abandoned San Gabriel and moved to Santa Fe, leaving behind cast-off, worn-out items. It is interesting—and perhaps symbolic—to note that Europe's first American capital is today the property of the San Juan Pueblo Indians, upon whose reservation lands the old site lies.

* * *

TUCSON HOUSE. Rising in Tucson is a 17-story 411-unit apartment project—tallest building in southern Arizona. The grandest, most impressive single thing about this concrete-and-glass magnificence (to be known as "Tucson House") may turn out to be not the size of the structure, the beauty of its desert landscaping, or the uniqueness of its "massive" swimming pool; but the description given to its for-rent apartments by Irwin L. Goldman, a Tucson public relations man. Mr. Goldman has characterized Tucson House's 411 dwellings as—now get this—"ranches in the sky."

* * *

LONG LOST LANDOWNER. A quarter-century ago, enterprising real estate promoters bought a square-mile of up-and-down land in the Little San Bernardino Mountains northeast of Indio, and carved it into a "subdivision"—on paper—of 2000 lots. About that time, Joshua Tree National Monument's boundaries were being drawn across these same mountains. The Park Service took one look at the subdivision checkerboard on the official county map, and wisely steered their boundary line around it. Few people have ever seen the land in question; in 25 years, no one connected with the Monument has talked to one of the lot owners—until a few weeks ago when a Southern California woman wandered into the Monument headquarters near Twentynine Palms. She had spent the morning looking for the lot her father had paid taxes on for many, many years. The best she could figure, she told the Park Service people, was that the lot was two miles off the Berdoo Canyon Road (four-wheel-drive only) — two of the most rugged miles in the Southwest. The woman decided — like 1999 lot owners before her — to let the land revert back to the county for non-payment of taxes. California is booming, but man will probably be subdividing the moon before this land is needed for homesites.

* * *

POT OF "GOLD." On a recent autumn day, Manuel Leivas of Blythe went into the Dome Rock Mountains near his home to "prospect for gold." Following a white quartz vein, he came across a cave about two miles south of Highway 60-70. There he discovered a bonanza of sorts—three pots of gourd seeds—beautiful earthen vessels, centuries old, fashioned by ancient Indians.

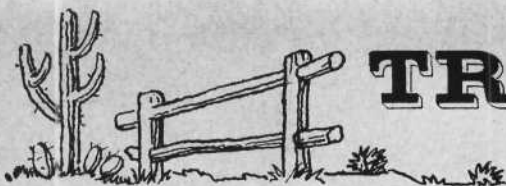
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4WD SURVIVAL. Bill Bryan, editor of "The Camel's Hump," bulletin of the Sareea Al Jamel Four Wheel Drive Club of Indio, made the following observation during the Cuban Crisis in late October: "Have you noticed how easy it is to acquire friends during the war scare after these people learn you have a four-wheel-drive vehicle? 'If the bomb hits,' a member of our club was asked by his neighbor, 'you will take my family up in the hills with you, won't you?' To which the 4wd owner replied: 'I can't feed eight more mouths, but if you will pick out the one child you want to survive, I'll take him along.'"

* * *

DECEMBER CALENDAR. Here's a list of the Southwest's special events this month: **Dec. 1**—Christmas Lighting Ceremony, Prescott, Ariz. **Dec. 1**—Clark County Sheriff's Mounted Posse Rodeo, Las Vegas. **Dec. 2**—First polo tournament of the season, Eldorado Polo Field, Palm Desert. **Dec. 9**—Antelope Valley Dog Show, Lancaster. **Dec. 9**—"Miracle of the Roses," Scottsdale, Ariz. **Dec. 30**—Rodeo, Flying E Ranch, Wickenburg, Ariz.

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TRADING POST

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BOOKS: "PANNING Gold for Beginners," 50c. "Gold in Placer," \$3. Frank J. Harnagy, Box 105, Prather, California.

OUT-OF-print books at lowest prices! You name it—we find it! Western Americana, desert and Indian books a specialty. Send us your wants. No obligation. International Bookfinders, Box 3003-D, Beverly Hills, California.

"GEMS & Minerals Magazine," largest rock hobby monthly. Field trips, "how" articles, pictures, ads. \$3 year. Sample 25c. Box 687J, Mentone, California.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Magazines, 1888-1961, any issue, maps, bound volumes. Free literature, "Geographic Hobby," price lists, circulars on books about collecting geographics. Periodical Service, Box 465-DE, Wilmington, Del.

WESTERN GEM Hunters Atlas—all three of those popular gem atlases combined in one big book, 93 full page maps with rock hunting areas spotted in color. Complete coverage of 11 western states, plus parts of Texas, South Dakota and British Columbia. Type of material, mileage and highways are shown. Price: \$2.50 postpaid. Scenic Guides, Box 288, Susanville, California.

"OVERLOOKED FORTUNES"—in the Rarer Minerals. Here are a few of the 300 or more you may be overlooking while hunting, fishing, mining, prospecting or rock hunting: Uranium, Vanadium, Columbium, Tantalum, Tungsten, Nickel, Cobalt, Titanium, Bismuth, Molybdenum, Selenium, Germanium, Mercury, Chromium, Tin, Beryllium, Gold, Silver, Platinum, Iridium, etc. Some worth \$1 to \$3 a pound, others \$25 to \$200 and ounce. Learn how to find, identify and cash in on them. New simple system. Send for free copy "Overlooked Fortunes in Minerals," it may lead to knowledge which may make you rich! Duke's Research Laboratory, Box 666, Dept-B, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

NEVADA TREASURE Hunters Ghost Town Guide. Large folded map. 800 place name glossary. Railroads, towns, camps, camel trail. \$1.50. Theron Fox, 1296-C Yosemite, San Jose 26, California.

"ARIZONA—RETIREMENT Frontier" just published. 60 page, 8 1/2 x 7" book on cost of living, jobs, health, climate, best places to retire, etc. Beautifully illustrated. Only \$1 postpaid. Retirement Search Service, Box 2893, Hollywood 28, Calif.

PROFIT WITH pleasure! Gold, fun and great vacation! Read Successful Gold Diving and Underwater Mining, \$2. Sea Eagle Mining Publications, 39 Calaveras, Goleta, Calif.

LEARN ABOUT gems from Handbook of Gems and Gemology. Written especially for amateur, cutter, collector. Tells how to identify gems. \$3 plus tax. Gemac Corporation, Box 808J, Mentone, California.

GOLD IS where you find it—says Frank L. Fish, noted treasure hunter. His new book, "Buried Treasure and Lost Mines" is authentic guide to hidden wealth. If you are truly one of Coronado's Children, this book is a must! 68 pages, 93 bonafide treasure locations, 20 photos and illustrations, including vicinity maps. \$1.50 per copy, postpaid. Send check or money order to: Amador Trading Post Publishing Co., L. Erie Schaefer, 14728 Peyton Drive, Chino, Calif.

"DEATH VALLEY Scotty Told Me" by Eleanor Jordan Houston. A ranger's wife recalls her friendship with the famous desert rat and some of his fabulous stories. \$1.50. A. F. Houston, Box 305, Coolidge, Arizona.

WRITERS SEND your books, articles, stories, plays for free evaluation, screening and sale. Write today! Literary Agent Mead, 915 Broadway, New York City 10.

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ARIZONA GOLD map—locations of lode and placer deposits from federal, state and private sources on blackline 30x36-inch U.S.G.S. base map, \$3. P. O. Box 10176, Phoenix 16, Arizona.

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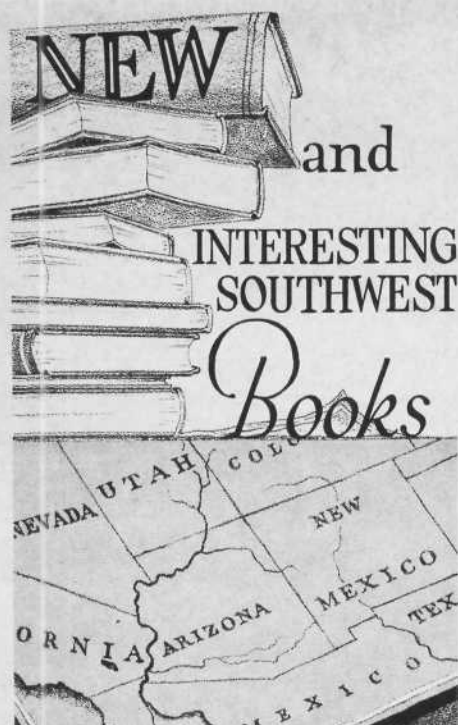
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—Charles E. Shelton

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